



Peconic Estuary Program Local Government Committee Meeting Summary

A Shared Vision for the Peconics

Suffolk County Community College Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center- Multipurpose Room – 20 East Main Street Riverhead

Wednesday, September 18th, 2019

1:00 -3:00 pm

The Peconic Estuary Program Local Government Committee discussed:

1. Follow-up on April 17th PEP Local Government Committee Meeting: See [meeting summary document](#) and re-iterate top priorities and PEP actions in the six Towns.
2. PEP outlined the Peconic Estuary Program Organizational Assessment that is currently underway with Coastwise consultants and CCMP Priorities going forward.
3. Community Preservation Fund (CPF) request letter (attached) and follow-up discussion.
 - The CPF request letter from PEP was discussed and PEP solicited questions on the CPF request.
 - John Bouvier (Southampton Town Councilman) supports the request.
 - The LGC members suggest including PEP's accomplishments on the CPF request letter to the Towns.
4. The Local Government Committee currently has a vacant chair seat which was formerly held by the Village of Southampton Mayor, Michael Irving.
 - PEP requested nominations for the chair seat and will vote on the chair replacement at the next Local Government Committee meeting.

Meeting Discussion Topics:

Suffolk County Septic Improvement Program and Town Septic Improvement Program

- There is an interest from the LGC members to facilitate community meetings for interested community groups to learn more about the Suffolk County Septic Improvement Program. The LGC members also want to see the Suffolk County grant approval process sped up, and that assistance be made available for groups who would like to submit clustered system applications.
- The LGC members felt there should be a focus on upgrading septic systems and connecting to sewage treatment plants for schools within the Peconic Estuary watershed.
 - *Action: PEP can talk to the County about how the grant application process can be expedited and work on providing assistance to groups who would like to apply for clustered systems.*
 - *Action: PEP can facilitate a presentation with Suffolk County to interested groups. Potentially at the Riverhead Civic Association Roundtable at the September 30th meeting.*

Comprehensive Peconic Estuary Monitoring

- The LGC members highlighted the need for a way to comprehensively track the health of the Peconic Estuary to gauge for example if projects are working, to understand the impacts of the installation of IA/OWTS and to understand the impacts of contamination resulting from storms.



Peconic Estuary Program discussed the new tools available in 2019 and 2020 to Local Government to address environmental priorities:

- Peconic Estuary Critical Lands Protection Strategy-see the [PEP website](#) for more information
 - PEP completed an update to the Peconic Critical Lands Protection Strategy (CLPS), originally completed in 2004, to take into account climate related variables, specifically sea level rise, in order to update land acquisition priorities.
 - The 2019 Critical Lands Protection Strategy ranks parcels based on: Habitat and Water Quality Protection, Inundation Areas, Groundwater Protection.
 - Goals of the updated CLPS:
 - Protection and acquisition of lands that will continue to preserve and improve water and habitat quality in the face of rising sea levels and increased temperatures.
 - Allow for the natural inland migration of critical wetland habitats as sea level rises and preserve living shorelines in an environment where shoreline hardening is likely to become increasingly common.
 - The information resulting from the new strategy will serve as an important tool for New York State, Suffolk County, and local agencies.
 - *Action: PEP will set up meetings with the Towns and Villages to discuss the CLPS and the Peconic Estuary Climate Action Plan.*
- Peconic Estuary Solute Transport Model- see the [PEP website](#) for more information
 - Peconic Estuary Program is working with the USGS to develop a Solute Transport Model for the Peconic Estuary Watershed.
 - USGS will produce a model of the Peconic Estuary ground watershed to assess the time-varying discharge of nitrogen into fresh and coastal waters within the Peconic Estuary watershed.
 - Goals of the Solute Transport Model:
 - Once the model is complete it can then be applied to run a limited set of scenarios to estimate resulting nitrogen loading rates over time. These tools will provide valuable insights into how nitrogen discharge likely will change in response to nitrogen mitigation efforts within the watershed (such as changes to wastewater and fertilizer inputs to the groundwater) to guide local, state and regional management actions.
 - The Peconic Estuary Program wants to ensure that our partners can effectively use the PE Solute Transport Model to guide nitrogen mitigation efforts and wants to make sure that the set of scenarios that the model runs are representative of local, state and regional management actions.
 - *Action: Peconic Estuary Program is requesting that the LGC members provide comment on the DRAFT Peconic Estuary Solute Transport Model Scenario List (attached).*
 - The Peconic Estuary Program wants to ensure that our partners can effectively use the PE Solute Transport Model to guide nitrogen mitigation efforts and wants to make sure that the set of scenarios that the model runs are representative of local interests and goals.
 - LGC comments on scenarios:
 - An additional scenario could be to model the clearing of additional land for development.
 - This is a groundwater focused model, and the impacts of stormwater runoff would be interesting to model as a next step.

DRAFT Peconic Estuary Solute Transport Model Scenario List

The [USGS-PEP Solute Transport Modeling Project](#) is developing a subregional solute transport model of the Peconic Estuary ground watershed to assess the time-varying discharge of nitrogen into fresh and coastal waters within the Peconic Estuary watershed. Once the model is complete it can then be applied to run a limited set of scenarios to estimate resulting nitrogen loading rates over time. These tools will provide valuable insights into how nitrogen discharge likely will change in response to nitrogen mitigation efforts within the watershed to guide local, state and regional management actions.

The Peconic Estuary Program wants to ensure that our partners can effectively use the PE Solute Transport Model to guide nitrogen mitigation efforts and wants to make sure that the set of scenarios that the model runs are representative of local, state and regional management actions. Our stakeholders discussed and provided comment on a list of potential scenarios at the November 2018 and May 2019 PE Solute Transport Model meetings.

Scenarios reference the [Draft Suffolk County Subwatersheds Wastewater Plan](#) (SWP).

Scenario	Description	Notes
1	No further nitrogen loading to the watershed	
2	No nitrogen load reduction in watershed	
3	The reduction in atmospheric deposition of nitrogen BUT no on the ground nitrogen load reduction in watershed	
4	Potential Future/full build-out in watershed at the current allowable density	<u>Detail from SWP:</u> For purposes of the SCSWP, Suffolk County Department of Economic Development and Planning developed the conditions used for potential future build-out which were based on the more stringent of Suffolk County Sanitary Code Article 6 or local zoning for all: Vacant Parcels without development restrictions, Agricultural parcels without development restrictions, and Subdividable low density residential parcels.
5	Potential mitigating Town actions	i.e. Increasing STP capacity/ sewer expansion projects, STP water reuse projects, Upzoning from 0.5 acres to 1 acre., Land preservation and easements, etc.
6	Full Implementation of Wastewater Treatment upgrades (I/A OWTS, sewerage and clustering) in 6 Peconic Estuary Management Areas	<u>Detail from SWP:</u> 6 Peconic Estuary Management Areas- Peconic Estuary Restoration and Protection Area I, II and III, Sag Harbor Cove and Connected Creeks, West Neck Bay and Creek and Menantic Creek, & Peconic Estuary Restoration and Protection Area IV.

7	Full Implementation of Proposed Sewering Proposals in Peconic Estuary Subwatersheds	<u>Detail from SWP:</u> Existing Sewer Proposals- Riverside Revitalization Project, Springs School District sewer project, Downtown Montauk Sewer project
8	Full Implementation of Wastewater Treatment upgrades in 0-2 year groundwater contributing area	<u>Detail from SWP:</u> 0-2 year groundwater contributing area in all priority areas ranking 1, 2, 3, 4
9	Full Implementation of Wastewater Treatment upgrades in 0-2 year groundwater contributing area and Phase II area	<u>Detail from SWP:</u> Phase II area- Surface water and groundwater priority area 1.
10	Full Implementation of Wastewater Treatment upgrades in Phase III area	<u>Detail from SWP:</u> Phase III area- Surface water priority area 2-4 and Groundwater priority area 2. 2-25/50 Year Contributing Area.
11	Implementation of Peconic Estuary watershed Potential Sewer Expansion Projects	<u>Detail from SWP:</u> Sag Harbor Cove & Riverhead Sewer District.
13	On the ground Fertilizer Management Actions in watershed and implementation of fertilizer best management actions in the watershed	
14	Model what wastewater management actions are needed to meet groundwater quality and quantity protection goals	
*Climate change scenarios can be a subset to each scenario		i.e. draught, increased intensity of precipitation events, rising groundwater levels.



Peconic Estuary Program Local Government Committee Roundtable

Suffolk County Community College Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center- Multipurpose Room – 20 East Main Street Riverhead

Wednesday, September 18th, 2019

1:00 -3:00 pm

RSVP is required. Please RSVP to Sarah Schaefer, Program Coordinator, Peconic Estuary Program at Sarah.Schaefer@suffolkcountyny.gov

Draft Agenda:

❖ Welcome and Introductions

Local Government Officials Serving on the Peconic Estuary Program Committees

- Policy Committee Representative: Riverhead Town Supervisor, Laura Jens-Smith
- Management Committee Representative: Southampton Town Councilman, John Bouvier
- *Vacant*- Local Government Committee Chair: Formerly Village of Southampton Mayor, Michael Irving

❖ Follow-up on April 17th PEP Local Government Committee Meeting: See [meeting summary document](#)

- Re-iterate top priorities and PEP actions in the six Towns – outline strategy development as it relates to our current work with Coastwise consultants and CCMP Priorities going forward.

❖ CPF Fund request letter (attached) and follow-up.

❖ Tools available in 2019 and 2020 to Local Government to address environmental priorities:

- Peconic Estuary Critical Lands Protection Strategy-click [here](#) for more information
- Peconic Estuary Solute Transport Model- click [here](#) for more information

❖ New Chair discussion

❖ Next steps: PEP Local Government Committee on TBD date.

The [Peconic Estuary Program \(PEP\)](#) works to preserve and improve the water quality and ecological integrity of the Peconic Bays. The 28 National Estuary Programs in the U.S. were designed to work in partnership with State and Local governments, driven by the distinct needs of the local geography within which each estuary resides. Having a robust Local Government Committee to identify regional actions is essential for the success of individual Estuary Programs. Efforts like a region-wide No Discharge Zone, the expansion and extension of the Community Preservation Fund, and the establishment of an intermunicipal affiliation, the Peconic Estuary Protection Committee (PEPC), are just some regional efforts arising from local watershed-based collaboration. The PEP seeks to aid in the guidance of planning decisions, ecological preservation and the protection of all waters within the estuary for the future use as one of the East End's most valued resources.

The PEP is currently revising our [Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#), which will guide the priority actions of the Program and our partners for the next 10 years.



August 9, 2019

Dear Town Supervisor and Members of the Town Board:

As you are aware, the Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund (CPF) was established in 1998 and extended in 2006 and 2016 to run until 2050 and was originally aimed solely at preserving land in the Peconic region. In 2016 voters agreed that 20% of the CPF was to be used for water quality improvement projects. Also allowable under the 2016 amendment was up to 2% of the total CPF to be granted to the Peconic Estuary Program for their dedicated work to Water Quality Improvement in the Peconics and to match the Federal dollars granted to the program.

At present the PEP budget is \$1,200,000 annually, of this only \$600,000 is available to us for salary and operational costs. We are one of the three least well-funded National Estuary Programs (NEPs) in the country and considered under-funded by the U.S. EPA. The model of the NEPs is for minimum equal matching dollars by all partners, in our case, New York State, Suffolk County and Local Governments for a total of \$2.6 million to be used at the direction of the Management, Policy and Local Government Committees.

We are asking you to commit to this dedicated funding stream for the Peconic Estuary Program as is allowable under the CPF Regulation. This was the intention of the amendment to the CPF legislation in 2016 and one to which the voters of the five Towns voted into local law. Continuous participation by the local governments will take place as a function of the Local Government Committee and the overall Management Conference. The Local Government Committee is an integral part of the organizational structure of PEP and the Chair of the Local Government Committee is a voting member of our Policy Committee and a local government representative has a vote on the Management Committee.

Attached, please find a cost break-down of the contribution by Town and based on the 2017 CPF revenue. We recognize this will vary and will be voted on annually by the Towns. It is our request at this time that the Towns pass the necessary resolution in their relevant town budgets. Please contact me with any questions at (631) 852-2961.

On behalf of the Management Committee,

Joyce Novak, PhD
Director

Attachment A: Cost Break-Down



We propose a three year phased in contribution from the five East End Towns as introduced by Assemblyman Thiele and discussed during the April 2019 East End Mayors and Supervisors meeting as follows:

Table 1: Three year phased in contribution from total Community Preservation Fund

FY 19-20	FY 20-21	FY 21-22
\$300,000	\$450,000	\$600,000

The matching dollar amount will remain at \$600,000 in each subsequent year. If Federal contributions are raised, we will review the possibility of raising the request for CPF dollars. This will be voted on by the Towns annually.

It is our request at this time that the Towns pass the necessary resolution in their relevant town budgets process to give proportionally the following amount for FY 19-20 (based on 2017 CPF available funding):

Table 2: Break-down of percent contribution per Town based on 2017 CPF revenues

Town	Percent Contribution (%)
East Hampton	27.8
Southampton	58.8
Riverhead	3.8
Southold	7.5
Shelter Island	2.1



Attachment B: Current Priorities of Peconic Estuary Program for East End Towns

The Peconic Estuary Program (PEP) has worked since 1992 to restore waters and habitat of the Peconic watershed. The estuary program draws its strength from its partners bringing the greatest skills and resources of each involved entity together to add value to the effort of bay restoration. Together we have achieved many positive benefits to our shared community; the estuary as a shared resource. Over the past year, we have come together strongly to all recognize that the effects of what one town or village does can affect another. Under the leadership of Suffolk County, the commencement and development of the Suffolk County water quality monitoring program took place. This has allowed us to understand the negative impacts to the estuary and to enable us to build a response to the many pollutants affecting our water. By fostering strong partnerships with US EPA, New York State, Suffolk County, local governments, non-profit partners, and business we have built a watershed protection team that accomplished much. However, we still have work to do, with expanding and even more complicated challenges today.

Some of our current priorities are:

- 1) Updating our monitoring protocols and water quality monitoring program at the county level, based on this assessment and with your participation we want to understand what your monitoring needs are and coordinate them and report to you directly annually.
- 2) Implementing the LINAP and recently released Suffolk County sub-watershed nitrogen reduction targets. Nitrogen load reductions are essential for the Peconics to be restored. We are developing a strategy for each Town to be able to roll out these plans.
- 3) Climate change in the region is a real challenge—how it will manifest itself and how we will respond locally. This will test the limits of our imagination, innovation, and possibly municipal budgets.
 - a. To this end, PEP will be releasing their updated Critical Lands Protection Strategy this year and using this tool in combination with our updated hardened shoreline assessment to assist the Towns in making decisions for their communities.
 - b. Coastal resilience is not a one-dimensional response to the evolution of our coastlines but instead a multi-faceted plan that will require extensive planning and foresight and innovation. Living shorelines alone will not save our communities but combinations of well thought and proven techniques will assist us in moving forward as one Peconic coastal community. Working together we can become a Climate-Smart Community - planning for all five towns as one region; we all face the same challenges so our response needs to be together and resourced



responses properly developed. We will incubate new ideas tried in other parts of the country and appropriate for our region, work with you to seek legislative authority if needed by the state, like the CPF or the no discharge zone designation, or new advanced technology septic strategy, and move us forward together on all the challenges we need to overcome to enable the Peconic Bays to be resilient to a world with changing climate.

- 4) Addressing all of these matters will likely require new planning and zoning, financing and governance innovations. The PEP, as part of a network of 27 other estuaries of national significance, is uniquely able to serve as grant or contract, coordinator, manager and innovation hub to address all these matters by drawing on the nation's best talent.



SIGN-IN SHEET:

PEP Local Government Committee Meeting
 SCCC Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center
 20 East Main St.
 Riverhead, NY 11901
 September 18, 2019
 1PM

NAME	AFFILIATION	PHONE	E-MAIL
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